

Neartown Meeting, January 27, 2015

1). Introductions – The Meeting was opened at 7:00 PM by Greg LeGrande, who asked all attendees to sign in and introduce themselves and affiliations.

2). Proposed Midtown TIRZ Expansion into Montrose – Steven David, Mayor’s Office of Economic Development

Greg gave a quick background on the Midtown TIRZ (Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone) proposal to annex parts of Montrose which was brought before Dec 2, 2014 City Council Meeting for review and planned for approval at the December 9th Council Meeting. District C councilwoman Ellen Cohen asked that the proposal be tabled until stakeholders could review and have input. A Town Hall meeting was held at St Thomas University Dec. 15. The consensus from the attendees at that meeting was unresponsive of annexation (at least in the short term) due to lack of awareness, review and buy in by members of the Montrose community.

Steven David from the Mayor’s Office of Economic Development spoke about the process and developments that led up to the proposal to annex Montrose, and the plan to move forward.

- Steven indicated not enough feedback was obtained from stakeholders in Montrose and annexation has been tabled till additional stakeholder feedback is obtained.
- He has been working to document a process for engaging stakeholders on creation/expansion of TIRZ; once approved, this will be followed going forward.
- The focus of discussion since the Town Hall meeting has been on the Museum District. The Museum District board voted January 20, 2015 to support the Midtown TIRZ annexing of that District. (Steven indicated that neither the Super Neighborhood nor individual civic clubs within the Museum District annexation area had been contacted for feedback yet, but that is planned.) The Museum District is less than 30% residential (the maximum permitted within a TIRZ) and Steven confirmed the Museums themselves have no tax base to fund a TIRZ increment.
- There is no timetable for the completion of annexation but, Steven said it was hoped to be done in 2015.
- The city plans to hold discussions with Montrose stakeholders about potential TIRZ alternatives (including an independent Montrose TIRZ), but on a slightly delayed schedule -- they hope to begin these in February.

Q&A followed –Highlights

- Montrose had applied to become TIRZ in 1994 and was denied.
- Montrose street improvements are the stated priority for the proposed annexation by the Midtown TIRZ

3). Super Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP) for 2015 – Update unavailable; to be discussed at next meeting.

4). Other

- Carolyn Garrard passed out invitations to “Do one thing” for Covenant House Feb 14.

- Officer Wayne Pate spoke of two different types of crime in Montrose.
- Sylvia Drew recounted PIP program of ReadyHouston .
- Kay Warhol brought up opportunity to hear about progress on the General Plan for Houston at Houston Tomorrow Livable Houston meeting on Jan 28. (Follow-up note: the City is beginning outreach to get feedback from citizens on the vision and goals for the General Plan. To request a presentation, civic associations can contact: planhouston@houstontx.gov.)

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM